

Appendix 2

Watford Borough Council Economic Development Action Plan 2015 – 2018

Introduction

This Economic Development Action Plan identifies and articulates the actions that Watford Borough Council aim to undertake to implement the vision and objectives of the Watford Economic Development Strategy.

This Action Plan will be continually reviewed and updated to ensure that it is kept current with what the local populous, both residents and businesses, want and need. The Action Plan will also take into account prevailing economic and social issues that arise, including global and national economic turbulence, policy change and social need.

The Action Plan will also allow Watford Borough Council to undertake all measures to achieve outcomes required by the Borough Council, this includes: bidding for opportunistic grant funds, minor project implementation due to public demand and requests, and resource targeting. Before undertaking any project, the Council will ensure that the project fits with the key priorities as identified through the Economic Assessment and Economic Development Strategy as well as all other Council Corporate procedures and Strategies.

The new accompanying Action Plan also states the proposed timetable for delivery; it must be noted, however, that where Watford Borough Council is working in partnership, the timetable is indicative due to the reliance on other partners in either the private, public or third sector. Watford Borough Council will therefore ensure that if a project is delayed or fails to be achieved, a reasons for this will be categorically stated.

The key investment priorities identified within the Watford Borough Council Economic Development Strategy are as follows:

- 1) The Sustainable Growth of Watford & its Economy**
- 2) Transport and Digital Connectivity**
- 3) Inward Investment and Business Retention**
- 4) Innovation & Enterprise**
- 5) Employability & Skills**

Economic Development Strategy Priority	Priority 1 – The Sustainable Growth of Watford & its Economy			
Strategic Alignment	WBC Corporate Plan CP1 Making Watford a better place to live WBC Corporate Plan CP2 To provide the strategic lea for Watford's sustainable economic growth One Watford – A well-planned town with homes to suit all needs Hertfordshire LEP Priority 1 – Maintaining global excellence in science & technology Hertfordshire LEP Priority 2 – Harnessing our relationships with London (& elsewhere) Hertfordshire LEP Priority 3 – Re-invigorating our places for the 21 st Century Hertfordshire LEP Priority 4 – Foundations for Growth			
Activities	Performance Outputs	Timetable	Lead Partner	External Partners
Adopt Local Plan part 2 to establish a clear strategic framework for the town's sustainable growth to 2031	Adoption of Plan Effectiveness of policies measured through AMR	Feb 2016	WBC	HCC LEP EA
Deliver the redevelopment of Charter Place as an extension to the Intu Centre	Approved scheme is delivered.	Spring 2019	INTU	Watford Borough Council, HCC
Deliver redevelopment of land around Watford Junction Station – SPA2 of the adopted Core Strategy	Adoption of Local Plan Part 2 including Site Allocations Revised Development Brief Develop Planning Performance Agreement	Feb 2016	Watford Borough Council	HSBC (Pensions), Network Rail, HCC, London Midland, Waterford Park, LEP
Deliver the redevelopment of Watford Health Campus – SPA3 of the adopted Core Strategy	Submission of planning application for Industrial Zone South with delivery in 2016 Submission of reserved matters applications for the Central Zone and Lakeside Zone	Feb 2016	LABV	Watford Borough Council Kier
Deliver the redevelopment of land in the Lower High Street – SPA4 of the adopted Core Strategy	Develop a brief to facilitate the redevelopment of the area.	2017	Watford Borough Council	Other landowners and partners to be determined
Secure physical and environmental improvements to the Dome Roundabout – SPA5 of the Core Strategy	Delivery of Cow Lane cycleway Investigate regeneration potential of Mirror Printers	2018	Watford Borough Council	Other landowners and partners to be determined
Deliver redevelopment of remainder of Royal mail sorting Office at Ascot Road – Part of SPA6 of the adopted Core Strategy	Develop Planning Performance Agreement	December 2015	Watford Borough Council	HCC, Orion Land and Leisure, NR, LUL

Deliver the regeneration of Watford Business Park	Secure redevelopment of 18 Caxton Way Redevelopment of Zone A Secure long-term partner for redevelopment and management of Business Park	Spring 2016	Watford Borough Council	Greenhills, Threadneedle
Secure the regeneration of outdated office sites in Clarendon Road	Consider the extension of Article 4 Direction Work with delivery partners to secure regeneration of sites Develop Supplementary Planning Guidance	Spring 2016	Watford Borough Council	Developers forum Other landowners and partners to be determined
Support the Town Centre BID	Yes vote BID Established	October 2015	TCP	WBC
Work on Local Plan 3 – the next review of the Local Plan	Complete SHMA/ FEMA with other SW Herts Districts	Spring 2016	Dacorum Borough council and Hertsmere Borough Council	Watford Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council
Economic Development Strategy Priority	Priority 2 – Transport and Digital Connectivity			
Strategic Alignment	WBC Corporate Plan CP1 Making Watford a better place to live WBC Corporate Plan CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth One Watford – A well-planned town with homes to suit all needs One Watford – A prosperous and educated town Hertfordshire LEP Priority 1 – Maintaining global excellence in science & technology Hertfordshire LEP Priority 2 – Harnessing our relationships with London (& elsewhere) Hertfordshire LEP Priority 3 – Re-invigorating our places for the 21 st Century Hertfordshire LEP Priority 4 – Foundations for Growth			
Activities	Performance Outputs	Timetable	Lead Partner	External Partners
Metropolitan Line Extension to Watford	Support the delivery of the Met Line Extension to Watford through involvement in Watford Regeneration Board	Jan 2020	London Underground Ltd	Network Rail, Watford Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council, TfL, HCC

Lobby for improved frequency in commuter and inter-city rail services	Support HCC Rail Strategy	December 2015	HCC	Watford Borough Council, NR, London Midland, Virgin, Watford and SW Herts Chamber of Commerce, LEP
Support proposals for Cross rail Services to Tring by 2026	Lobby Crossrail	Ongoing	Crossrail	Watford Borough Council, Dacorum Borough Council, HCC, NR, Watford and SW Herts Chamber of Commerce, LEP
Lobby for and support proposals for capacity improvements to Junction 5 of the M1	Support HCC in development of Transport Vision to 2050 Lobby Highways England	Ongoing	HCC	Watford Borough Council, Watford and SW Herts Chamber of Commerce, LEP
Lobby for and supporting proposals to improve service frequency and quality of Abbey Line Services	Support HCC Rail Strategy	Ongoing	NR	Watford Borough Council, HCC, LEP, Franchisee, Community Rail Partnership, AbFly, St Albans District Council
Ensuring coordinated delivery of major development projects to ensure minimal disruption to the local road network during construction	Work on Watford is Open for Business Campaign Promote good network management	Ongoing	Herts County Council	Watford Borough Council, TCP, , Watford and SW Herts Chamber of Commerce,
Work with HCC to develop Urban Transport Plan	Engage with HCC and Dacorum Borough Council in the development of the plan	TBA	HCC	Watford Borough Council, Dacorum Borough Council, local stakeholders
Implement Parking Strategy	Timescales and milestone set out in Strategy	Ongoing	Watford Borough Council	All road users
Investigate the feasibility of a new access from WBP to Tolpits Lane	Feasibility study undertaken	TBA	Watford Borough Council	Three Rivers District Council, HCC, Business Park Tenants, Local Residents
Maintain and update the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Plan updated	Ongoing	Watford Borough Council	All infrastructure providers
Deliver Town Centre WiFi	WiFi delivered	December 2015	TechWiFi	Watford Borough Council, HCC
Improve network of electric charging points across the Borough	New charging points delivered. Next planned are Woodside Leisure Centre and Lower High street	Spring 2016	Watford Borough Council	HCC, Evalu8 and Electric Blue

Roll out Intelligent Transport Systems	ITS rolled out	Ongoing	HCC	WBC, Transport Operators
Improve Town Centre Car Parks	Satellite Car parks upgraded Improve routes to car parks from town centre Improved management of spaces to meet needs of broader range of users	Spring 2019	CitiParks and INTU	Watford Borough Council, HCC, TCP
Economic Development Strategy Priority	Priority 3 – Inward Investment & Business Retention			
Strategic Alignment	WBC Corporate Plan CP1 Making Watford a better place to live WBC Corporate Plan CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth WBC Corporate Plan objective 5 – Supporting individuals and the community One Watford – A prosperous and educated town Hertfordshire LEP Priority 1 – Maintaining global excellence in science & technology Hertfordshire LEP Priority 2 – Harnessing our relationships with London (& elsewhere) Hertfordshire LEP Priority 3 – Re-invigorating our places for the 21 st Century Hertfordshire LEP Priority 4 – Foundations for Growth			
Activities	Performance Outputs	Timetable	Lead Partner	External Partners
Develop Watford Brand	Watford brand developed	TBA	Watford Borough Council	TCP, WFC, LABV
Improve Watford For You Website	Website updated Move to BID	October 2015	Watford For You	Watford Borough Council, One Watford, SW Herts and Watford chamber of Commerce
Inward Investment Pack	Development of an information pack to assist businesses potentially investing in the town, available as a downloadable PDF from WFY website.	March 2016	Watford Borough Council	Watford Chamber of Commerce, One Watford, Business Advisory Group (BAG), Watford for You
PING (Pharmaceuticals Interest Network Group)	Facilitation of networking event between a number of Watford's major pharma related companies	Ongoing	Watford For You	Watford Borough Council, Watford Chamber of Commerce and Private sector partners including Mathew Arnold Baldwin
CING (Creative Interest Network group)	Facilitation of networking event between a number of key creative sector companies in the town	Ongoing	Watford For you	Watford Borough Council, Watford Chamber of Commerce and Private sector partners
Create combined Business Events Calendar	Work with key stakeholders to ensure the cohesive delivery of event, arts and heritage events in the Town	Spring 2016	Watford Borough Council	Watford for You, TCP, Palace Theatre, events organisers, Watford Chamber of Commerce and Private sector partners

Create a Business Engagement/ Communications Strategy	Create a Watford Business Charter outlining the Council's commitment to working with business and providing advice and signposting to relevant council services	December 2016	Watford Borough Council	LEP, Herts Better Regulators Forum, Watford Chamber of Commerce, BAG and Private sector partners
Create a Watford Employer Task Force	Implement Watford Skill Makers Board Strategy Board have formed and are engaging with major employers. Strategy to be produced	TBA	Watford Skill Makers Board	One Watford, Watford for You, TCP, Palace Theatre, events organisers, Watford Chamber of Commerce and Private sector partners
Developing Partnership Agreements	Continuing to develop formal agreements with private sector partners to help develop a coherent local network of support and expertise in promoting the inward investment agenda.	Ongoing	Watford Borough Council	Watford Chamber of Commerce and Private sector partners
Economic Development Strategy Priority	Priority 4 – Innovation and Enterprise			
Strategic Alignment	WBC Corporate Plan CP1 Making Watford a better place to live WBC Corporate Plan CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth WBC Corporate Plan CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed town One Watford – A prosperous and educated town One Watford – A well informed community where everybody can contribute Hertfordshire LEP Priority 1 – Maintaining global excellence in science & technology Hertfordshire LEP Priority 2 – Harnessing our relationships with London (& elsewhere) Hertfordshire LEP Priority 3 – Re-invigorating our places for the 21 st Century Hertfordshire LEP Priority 4 – Foundations for Growth			
Activities	Performance Outputs	Timetable	Lead Partner	External Partners
Support Wenta in development of Watford Business Technology Centre	Develop Business Plan and identify a site	TBA	Wenta	Watford Borough Council, SW Herts and Watford Chamber of Commerce
Work with key partners to encourage enterprise through support for small businesses and land for the development of new premises	Measure number of new business start ups Secure intensification of use of commercial land	Ongoing	Wenta	Watford Borough Council , SW Herts and Watford Chamber of Commerce Business Advisory Group and other private sector partners
Support business by addressing their skills and training challenges and support voluntary and community sectors to deliver quality services	Providing advice and support	Ongoing	Watford Borough Council	W3RT

Develop a strategy to increase the number of knowledge based jobs within the town	Knowledge based strategy developed Monitor number of jobs within this sector	TBA	Watford Borough Council	LEP, South West Herts and Watford Chamber of Commerce
Embed support for the promotion and development of innovation skills	Work with Hertfordshire's growth programmes - The Growth Hub, University of Herts, LEP, Green Triangle, UKTI, Growth Accelerator	Ongoing	Watford Borough Council	The Growth Hub, University of Herts, LEP, Green Triangle, UKTI, Growth Accelerator
Develop business engagement programme to establish working relationships and collaboration with primary and small business that will be tomorrow's employers	Produce a communications strategy	Spring 2016	Watford Borough Council	LEP, South West Herts and Watford Chamber of Commerce
Continue to identify key issues impacting business and working collaboratively to find solutions	Continue to engage with business via sector working groups and Big Business Connect	Ongoing	Watford Borough Council	Private sector partners
Economic Development Strategy Priority	Priority 5 – Employability and Skills			
Strategic Alignment	WBC Corporate Plan CP1 Making Watford a better place to live WBC Corporate Plan CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth WBC Corporate Plan CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed town One Watford – A Prosperous and Educated town One Watford – A well-informed community where everybody can contribute Hertfordshire LEP Priority 1 – Maintaining global excellence in science & technology Hertfordshire LEP Priority 2 – Harnessing our relationships with London (& elsewhere) Hertfordshire LEP Priority 3 – Re-invigorating our places for the 21 st Century Hertfordshire LEP Priority 4 – Foundations for Growth			
Activities	Performance Outputs	Timetable	Lead Partner	External Partners
Support the Local Skills Board	Develop Skills Strategy	Ongoing	West Herts College	Hertfordshire LEP, Job Centre Plus, Oakland's College, local skills providers and local businesses
Support the LEP	Delivery around its Herts-wide Skills Strategy	Ongoing	Hertfordshire LEP	Local delivery partners including schools and colleges and local businesses
Ensure the new jobs created through the Major Development Projects are made available to local suitably qualified people	Development proposals/initiatives where the council have a pivotal role will lead by example in terms of supporting and developing the local supply chain e.g. Watford Health Campus	Ongoing	Watford Borough Council	Private Sector partners such as Kier, Jobcentre Plus, CVS, Watford Chamber of Commerce

Improve access to training to enable individual's to obtain the necessary skills for sustainable employment	Implement Watford Skill Makers Board Strategy Board have formed and are engaging with major employers. Strategy to be produced	TBA	West Herts College	Watford Borough Council, private sector partners
Identify need within local communities and facilitate access to skills to meet the gaps in the local labour market	Implement Watford Skill Makers Board Strategy Board have formed and are engaging with major employers. Strategy to be produced	TBA	West Herts College	Watford Borough Council, private sector partners
Increase the number of people in apprenticeships and work experience placements	Implement Watford Skill Makers Board Strategy Board have formed and are engaging with major employers. Strategy to be produced	TBA	West Herts College	Watford Borough Council, private sector partners
Support for local skills providers to address demand	Facilitate engagement between private sector and JCP as well as encouraging their presence at future inward investment and business support initiatives.	Ongoing	Jobcentre Plus	Watford Borough Council, CV, Watford Chamber of Commerce and other private sector stakeholders.
Local housing provision to support local employment agenda	Deliver housing in accordance with Local Plan targets Deliver range of housing in accordance with Local Plan policies Implement the Housing Strategy	Ongoing	Watford Borough Council	Private house builders, Registered Providers, Watford Community Housing Trust
Local procurement supported through the Social Value Act and within development projects	Continued promotion of public sector procurement	Ongoing	Watford Borough Council	Private sector partners
Support adequate school provision with HCC	Regular meetings with HCC to discuss school provision Allocation of school sites in Local Plan Part 2 Consideration of school on Farm terrace allotments Work with partners to deliver school as part of Watford Junction redevelopment	Ongoing	HCC	Watford Borough Council, LABC, NR, private sector partners